



Controlling the World and the Speed of Things

Your ability to move forward has as much to do with the gear you're in, as the hill you're on.

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“Life is like a ten speed bicycle. Most of us have gears we never use.”
— Charles M. Schulz

Things in the world proceed at different rates, and we operate at different rates. We think at one rate, speak at another, and feel at a third. We coordinate with each other when there's a common tempo, but these rates are often unclear, leaving us to act at our own pace.

We get burned out when we have to operate too long or too fast. We're usually aware of what's happening and we disengage intentionally, but in other situations, we lose clarity. We can feel that we're not “up to speed” without knowing why.

Keeping up with traffic is a rhythm we've learned to maintain. We pace ourselves with what's around us. We tolerate some faster or slower drivers to a point, but the driver who zooms past us, or who drives so slowly as to back-up traffic, is deeply annoying. These potential risks make us uncomfortable.

Disconcerting situations trigger us. Regardless of their actual effect, outliers disturb us emotionally, upsetting our peace of mind. Humans not only behave collectively without thought, but are aware that it feels comfortable. We think in common, but the thoughts don't much matter. We get in step first and think in step later.

This is herd mentality. The smarter you are, the more you lead with your intellect, and the more susceptible you are to it. That's because herd behavior is emotional, and your intellect is driven by your emotions.



Rhythm

We have many rhythms of attention, each are flexible to a certain degree. We can converse and chop vegetables at the same time. We can merge from local to highway traffic flowing at twice the speed. We perform these shifts almost unconsciously, as our minds have some kind of automatic transmission.

If you're in conversation with a driver who's making a transition in traffic, you'll notice a break in their thinking. They will momentarily redirect their thoughts. A temporary wave of distraction washes over them, the previous conversation then bobs back to the surface. If the distraction is too large, like if one is being forced to merge into a fast lane filled with large trucks, the conversation may not recover.

My friend Eugene Wigner was a careful, thinking man. I was young, he was old, and we'd walk on the sidewalk in Austin, Texas, and talk about physics. Eugene was bright and thought at his own pace. He was one of Einstein's close friends.

I think his hearing was particularly sensitive, as he was extremely annoyed by loud noises. The only time I knew him to swear was when a loud motorcycle would drive past. This happened every time: the noise completely rattled him. He lost his train of thought, and he couldn't shut it out.

We can all be distracted by outside events. It's not their volume that intrudes so much as their disorganization, the way they disturb the rhythm of our thoughts. It's your sensitivity that determines whether you're disturbed, not the volume of the disturbance. Sensitivity is a subtle thing because

different mental gears operate simultaneously to keep one's thoughts in focus.

If you're in a quiet, contemplative state, even minor distractions, such as your daily schedule, can disrupt you. If you're in a rapidly responsive state, like trying to collect yourself as you head outdoors, or collect the kids for a carpool, then simple, sensitive thoughts are impossible.

These tempos are the frequencies of your brainwaves. I've spent years watching the complexity of people's thoughts vary with their brainwaves. There are direct correlations: slow, regular brainwaves lead to wide, expansive thoughts; fast, staccato brainwaves allow you to incorporate exceptions and distractions.

If you can integrate brainwaves with higher frequency events in your environment, then you can react more quickly. If you cannot accommodate these frequencies, then you appear to be distracted and annoyed.

Many of your emotions of anger and irritation arise with bursts of fast brainwaves, as well as events that cause bursts of fast brainwaves—like Eugene and his annoying motorcycles. These stormy brainwaves have emotional origins, triggered by events, that direct or distract our thoughts.

The important point is this: these are brainwave induced states. There is no intellectual reason for your feelings. You will manufacture reasons later. You are moved into or out of a contemplative states by the reaction of your brain's rhythms, going from calm to vigilant to irritated. Once you've created a reason for your feeling, the reason becomes an explanation, but the reason is an illusion. The state creates the thoughts, not the other way around.



Entrainment

Music is the obvious example. Music entrains you into mentally organized or disorganized states. Once you're in such a state, you ascribe your state to the music. But your state developed before you were aware of it. You synchronize with the stimulus, and the stimulus holds you in that state. You have little control over your state; you lose the state when the music stops.

Your ability to function is determined by your awareness. We think we're in control in the way that we speed up and slow down for traffic, but we're not in control. If you try to tap your foot against the beat, you can't. We mimic the rhythm of our environment, and we pick the environment that suits the result

we're looking for.

We're not as good at this as we think. Many difficulties, which we think are problems in need of solutions, are not problems. They're situations to which we are not synchronized. Solutions "fall into place" when the situation is correct.

How much deductive thinking are you actually doing? Not much. In most cases, we're waiting for familiar patterns to manifest. We don't solve problems so much as we move toward consonance and away from conflict.

This is the foundation of brainwave training. It's a process that's like evolving from a 3-speed mind to a 21-speed mind, to gain the ability to sense the need for different levels of synchrony, and to shift smoothly. This is critically important, but most people are not even aware that they shift gears at all. Brainwave training can enhance every aspect of your life, but most people are oblivious to the need, the process, and the potential.

If you think you're a slow thinker, or you think you're bad at math, or you feel you're too anxious, this is why. It has nothing to do with your intelligence, your mathematically ability, or the stresses in your environment. It's how you're tuned. These behaviors are a consequence of your brain's habitual response.

Brainwaves are easily trained, and the brainwave patterns you create yourself are quite "sticky." This is different from entrained patterns, which arise from our tendency to synchronize with our environment. Entrained patterns are "thin," we move into and out of them quickly: music, group-think, and the astrological trend of the day triggered by those around us.

Brainwave patterns are a kind of physical fitness in that they improve with exercise. And just as we all know fitness will improve our health, most of us make little attempt to improve. With relatively easy brainwave training you could become more intelligent, less anxious, and more emotionally sensitive.

The "stickiness" that makes one's habitual patterns easy to overlook, also creates the promise of improvement. Once you develop a new pattern, it sticks. But this only happens when you are controlling your emotions.

<If you'd like to know more, if you'd like to know how your personal problems are really brainwave patterns, book a free call using the button below.>



Closer, 2019, Cate McGuire

Learning

There are three ways to train brainwaves: feedback, entrainment, and intention. We're familiar with all of them, but have little experience in controlling any of them. They are fundamental to our natural ability to learn. In spite of this, those we call teachers know nothing about them. This is because learning requires emotional entrainment. The presentation of information is not sufficient.

This is why you should avoid teachers: they don't understand how people learn. If they did, they would not be called teachers, they would be called colleagues, partners, or mentors. They would emotionally synchronize with you.

Feedback is direct and effective, but also the most confusing. It is most effective when rewarding and inhibiting reactions are immediate, consistent, and emotional. People who train animals know this, but those who train people, think human beings learn differently. We don't.

Entrainment is our typical form of brainwave engagement, and it teaches us little because we don't control it. People who train people build entraining environments, they tell you what to think. This has traditionally been through the use of rewards and punishments; now it's popular to "gamify" learning situations. If these games are not emotionally resonant for the learner, this form of entrainment-based teaching fails.

I develop intention with my clients. If your experience generates positive and negative emotions, then you can create your own learning environment, but it's hard to control if your feelings are ambiguous. If your learning experience is creative and rewarding, then you'll learn quickly and naturally. But if you feel ambiguous or the process is unpleasant, then learning is not happening. Only teachers are fooled.

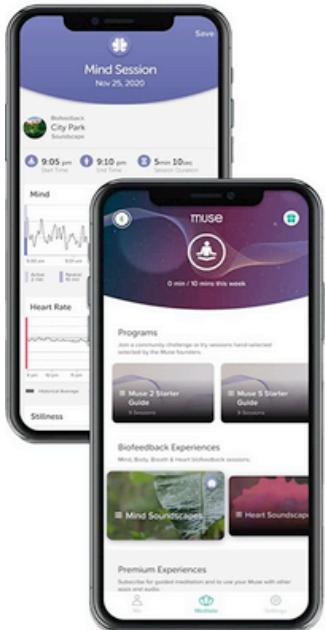
Brainwave feedback involves the use of an electronic amplifier to focus your attention on the production of specific brainwaves. You experience how you're able to increase or decrease these

oscillations. When this is coupled with pleasant, calming, and comfortable experiences, you learn effortlessly.

This learning process lacks any intellectual point because it does not involve content. You are not learning to think about any thing in particular, you are rather learning to become more or less attentive in ways that affect your mood. The learning process is empty, similar to trying to see more or less of one color in an unchanging picture. The learner typically asks, “how do I make a change?” And the only answer is, “I don’t know, just follow the feeling.”

What might seem hopeless is made easy using computer feedback. The computer notices the change in your brainwaves and converts this into engaging audio or video. For example, the computer might sense quieter brainwaves and cause the picture to become clear, colorful, animated, and interesting. In contrast, when you move away from the target state, becoming agitated or uncoordinated, the picture becomes dull, cloudy, and harsh.

MUSE 2



4 Meditation Experiences That Respond To Your Brain & Body

Mind Meditation

Hear the thunderstorm calm into a gentle rain when your mind is calm & focused (EEG)

Heart Meditation

Feel your heartbeat sync to the sound of a soothing drum (PPG + Pulse Oximetry)

Body Meditation

Become aware of your body posture with wind chimes that respond to subtle movement shifts (Accelerometer)

Breath Meditation

Learn calming breathing techniques by matching your breath to ambient tones (PPG + Gyroscope)

Integrating Internal Awareness

Hypnosis enables me to paint a visualization in my client’s mind that matches their brain state as I perceive it. When I observe their brain state to be calm and integrated, I ask them to envision colorful, interesting environments. When their state becomes agitated or uncoordinated, I paint a dull, flat picture.

I can’t provide the computer’s measured feedback, but I can get right to their state of mind and engage them. If they’re attached to a brainwave monitor, then I can both see their internal and external states. These simple levels of discernment frequently escape people.

The problem with computer-based feedback has been the technology’s price and complexity. The price is still high for the more sensitive equipment, but for basic work the price and convenience are almost within reach of a curious client willing to experiment.

I continue to look at the various devices, and I’m waiting for greater functionality at a price clients can

afford. The current price for a simple brainwave feedback system is about US\$250 / CA\$300. Nick Urban has a review of some of these devices here: <https://outliyr.com/best-home-neurofeedback-devices-machines>

Controlling your brainwaves is a fundamental skill that maps directly to focus, mood, and arousal. These are the aspects of our awareness that we understand intellectually, but using our intellect to control our intellect puts us in a blind cycle. The whole point of neurofeedback is to get measures that can provide an objective base for training and reflection.

At the most refined level, we can learn detailed control of our brainwaves, gaining control of specific frequencies at specific areas within our brain. But for most of us, a basic, whole-brain level of control offers the largest benefits. This is why simple mindfulness and focus training are popular.

Basic mental state training is a project separate from dealing with real-life issues. The cognition involved in reason and intellect, and the brain-function stability of mood and emotion, are complements. They operate at different levels. For most of my clients, cognitive control and emotional balance are their primary issues. They are looking for support in their sense of self.

I encourage my clients to build a solid brain-function foundation, and for this I'm leaning toward easy, brainwave training. A reliable and well-supported product is the Muse 2, made by InteraXon, which runs on either a free smartphone app, or a monthly service plan, which provides more training options.

A 3-month membership costs US\$150, includes the hardware and software, but requires your own smartphone: <https://choosemuse.ca/pages/pricing>

Many clinical training programs are possible, but brainwave training displaces the cognitive-emotional focus which I offer successfully, and which takes my clients out of states of trauma and distress. It is easy to add baseline brain training, which builds on the foundation that cognitive-emotional therapy provides.

Brain training skills are basic to effective function, but hypnosis and counselling address acute states of distress that often need attention first. It is also true, that when one's critical balance is restored, one's brain naturally moves toward more effective brainwave states.

If you'd like to explore the integration of these essential functions, call me. I can suggest a program that combines the two.

Click here to book a free discovery call:

<https://www.mindstrengthbalance.com/schedule15>